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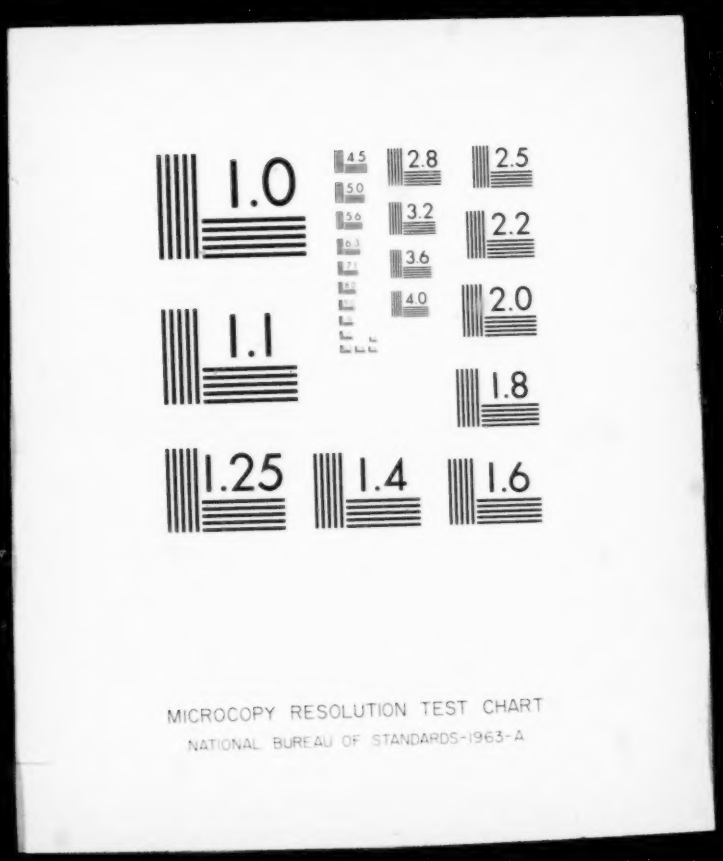

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EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AS ORGANIZATIONAL RENEWAL

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Until a few years ago, the terms administration and leadership were often used synonymously in the literature on managerial and organizational behavior. In 1964, Lipham made a distinction in the NSSE yearbook entitled Behavioral Science and Educational Administration. He suggested that administration has to do with the maintenance of ongoing structure and practice while leadership implies the initiation of new structure and/or practice. Thus, in simple terms, administration entails the smooth functioning of the status quo while leadership implies changing the status quo.

The very fact that educational practitioners in formal positions of authority have been called "administrators" reflects the expectations which have historically accrued to such roles. In the latter part of the 19th century, the administrator was viewed as a master teacher, one whose function was to show teachers how to teach using the best materials and equipment then available. The emphasis shifted in the early part of the 20th century and the administrator of that period was primarily a business manager whose chief concern was the operation of the school in an economically efficient manner.

Labor's reaction to Scientific Management in the private sphere influenced the practice of administration in education in the 1930's and 1940's. During this period, the administrator was urged to be democratic and to include subordinates in the making of decisions which affected them. Group decision-making and committee work became the norms but the administrator often used these techniques to manipulate and to reach his pre-determined ends with a little less friction and conflict.

In the 1950's and 1960's, administration became somewhat more "scientific" with the incorporation of content from the behavioral sciences as a guideline for administrative action and the attempt to develop theories of administrative behavior. This thrust lent a certain aura of academic respectability to a profession and an area of

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study which had historically been task-oriented and sans any theoretical base.

It is important to note that in all of these eras the emphasis was on how to better do what the schools were doing; that is optimizing the operation of existing structures and practices as opposed to initiating new ones. The suggested ways to do this changed but the goal remained the same as did the criteria by which to judge the effectiveness of educational administrators -- longevity and a smooth operation.

More recently, expectations of the schools and the practitioners within them have shifted and the schools are now expected to help solve many of the social problems which currently characterize our society. This expectation implies educational change and administrators are feeling pressures from many sources to innovate, change; that is, to lead. In many cases the response has been to purchase and install a hardware or software package which has perhaps been useful elsewhere as evidence that the schools are changing and administrators are leading. Unfortunately this is "reactive leadership" at best and is not the "proactive leadership" which is required of educational leaders at this point in time.

The primary assumption of this paper and the leadership development model posed in it is that educational leadership is much more than the reactive change which is so widespread in education today. Rather, leadership has to do with keeping educational organizations adaptive to the changing needs of the clients they serve and the society at large. This is a much broader conception of the nature of educational leadership and implies a repertoire of concepts and skills which few educational leaders possess. In essence, it implies the capability to promote and perpetuate a continuous process of organizational renewal.

A MODEL

Implicit in the concept of organizational renewal are a number of processes which must be carried on to maintain a state of organizational adaptation and flexibility. These processess suggest the kinds of competencies needed by educational

leaders for implementation and furthermore have implications for the kinds of pre-service programs necessary to develop these competencies. What follows are a listing and brief discussion of the elements of organizational renewal, the competencies necessary to implement these elements (as conceived by the author), and the training components perceived as necessary to develop these competencies.

1. Assessment of Educational Needs. It seems obvious that the flexible and adaptive organization must be constantly aware of the ever-changing needs and wants of the clients it serves. This suggests the institutionalization of a feedback system which provides this information from the environment as well as data as to "how the organization is perceived as doing" by its clients. As an example, the automobile industry engages in continual market research to assess the needs and wants of consumers as well as an assessment of "how we're doing" as evidenced by sales figures and other pertinent market data.

In education, the assessment of need implies the capability to measure directly the attitudes, interests, and aspirations of the client system; to infer same from demographic, social and economic data describing the client system; to deduce need on the basis of data which describe the output of the organization as it is presently functioning; and finally to judge the worth and validity of those premises which manifestly or latently underlie present structure and practice.

These capabilities suggest that the educational leader, in order to carry out the needs assessment component of organizational renewal, must possess the competencies noted below, the implications of which appear obvious for preparation programs.

- The construction and use of instrumentation designed to measure educational attitudes, aspirations, interests, etc.
- Demographic analysis skills
- Population estimating and forecasting
- Community analysis skills
- Interviewing and field study methods
- The construction and use of instrumentation designed to measure educational output in both academic and behavorial terms
- Data analysis and reporting skills

2. Assessment of the Current State of the Organization. The needs assessment component described above should result in a "picture" of the overall present and projected needs of the district in question. The next logical step in the organizational renewal process is an analysis of the degree to which current needs are being satisfied and some prediction as to the future capability of the organization to satisfy projected needs. Obviously much of the former can be induced from the data gathered in the needs assessment component as those data are subjected to critical analysis. But beyond this, implied in the "organizational status" component is a study of current organizational structure, program structure, resource allocation, and organizational processes as they facilitate or retard the satisfaction of those needs which have been identified. Additionally, future resource projections must be made to assess the degree to which the organization will at least have the resources necessary to facilitate the satisfaction of projected needs.

Implied in this description of "current status assessment" are skills in the following areas which again lend themselves to speculation about desirable preparation program components.

- Organizational analysis skills
- Organizational control structures
- Organizational communications
- Organizational decision-making
- Organizational field study methods
- Future resource forecasting

3. Translation of Needs into New and Revised Programs. The third step in the process of organizational renewal as it is perceived by this author is the development of new and/or modified structures and practices designed to facilitate the satisfaction of identified needs which take into account the organization's capabilities as derived from the current status phase. In perhaps more simple terms, the question must now be asked "How can we better do what we need to do in light of what we know of what's expected of us and how we are currently functioning?" Essentially, this is a

program development phase.

It is at this point that the initial steps of the process known as systems analysis are applicable. Needs are now translated into goals - rather broadly worded statements of purpose - which are then transformed into objectives - more specifically stated ends that are measurable and include the conditions under which the ends will be expected as well as the level of performance which will be deemed "successful." Alternative programs - mixes of people, content, time, space, materials, etc. - are then posed and costed out and a decision is made as to which ones are most likely to reach the objectives which have derived from assessed needs and goal statements.

In the school organization, program alternatives are educational and it is obvious that knowledge about program alternatives is available from a number of sources. Thus to carry on this phase of organizational renewal it is necessary that the educational leader possess skills related to information storage and retrieval systems and the various networks available nationally from which to solicit information relative to emergent educational practices and processes.

Nothing in the discussion to this point should be interpreted to mean that the formal educational leader should unilaterally assess needs, current status, and generate program alternatives. Rather, the more members of the client system and organizational incumbents who are involved, the more receptive is the organization likely to be to flexibility and adaptation. Thus the formal leader needs to involve significant others in all phases of organizational renewal from needs assessment to evaluation and system monitoring. This implies interpersonal and group process skills which are included at this point in the model but which the writer sees as applicable to all phases of the organizational renewal process.

- System analysis skills
- Cost-benefit analysis skills
- Cost-effectiveness analysis skills
- Knowledges of information storage and retrieval systems such as ERIC, SRIS, etc.

- Interpersonal competence skills
- Group process, discussion, and leadership skills
- Problem solving and conflict resolution skills
- Communication skills
- Mcdeling skills
- Education program development skills

4. Implementation of New and Revised Programs. It is at this point that the previously discussed components of organizational renewal bear fruit or rot on the vine of organizational inertia. In a sense, this implementation phase is the acid test of educational leadership since it entails a true measure of the educational leader's ability to operationalize organizational flexibility and adaptability in the form of new and revised programs geared to assessed needs and organizational capability. The organization is either adaptive as evidenced by its adoption of new programs or it is not, and it is perhaps this criterion which must be the ultimate yardstick by which to assess leadership effectiveness. Andrew Halpin posed this paradigm years ago but it is only now acquiring meaning in an era of accountability.

Implied competencies which suggest themselves in this phase relate to change agentry and organizational development (OD). The educational leader must be able to persuade client system members to at least have an open mind and try out the new and revised programs which have derived from the preceeding phases of organizational renewal. Hopefully this receptivity will have been engendered through client system involvement in those phases but, beyond this, there is also the need to create an open climate in which change, adaptation, flexibility, etc. are expected and are the prevailing organizational norms. The creation of this kind of climate can facilitate the persistence and institutionalization of change as well as allowing leadership (innovative) acts to emerge from secure and less threatened members in all levels of the system.

In order to function effectively in this phase of organizational renewal, it appears that the components listed below would of necessity be included in preparation programs for educational leaders.

- The change agent's role
- Characteristics of innovators
- Identifying resistance to change
- Identifying supports for change
- Formulating change strategies
- Organizational development skills
- Transfer and stabilization of change
- Characteristics of schools as client systems
- Role theory
- T-Group knowledge and experience

5. Management of New and Revised Programs. Assuming implementation of the desired change, the educational leader must now manage the new and/or revised programs in such a way that they are given a fair trial, develop broader support within the client system, and are modified in light of new information, lack of resources, unanticipated conditions, etc. Essentially this means managing the changes so that they are perceived as valuable, credible, and, very importantly, fiscally responsible. As Matthew Miles has noted, changes are often resisted and/or not institutionalized because they are perceived as an unwise allocation of resources or, in those cases where there is external funding, something to be tried for awhile before reverting to the "normal" way of doing things.

Competencies which suggest themselves as necessary for the educational leader to function effectively in this phase of organizational renewal and which ought to be included in preparation programs relate to project management and follow.

- Project definition
- Cost estimating and pricing
- Planning time scales
- Scheduling resources
- Materials control
- Maintaining programs
- Modifying programs
- Relating achievement to expenditures

6. Program Monitoring and Evaluation. It is conceivable (possible? likely?) that innovations stimulated by an educational leader might not be successful. Unfortunately, most institutions do not afford incumbents the "freedom to fail", a practice which effectively inhibits openness, flexibility, and adaptability. Where change is attempted however, there is a tendency to persist in obviously unproductive

change efforts since upward occupational mobility is generally dependent upon success in traditional ventures as opposed to failure in atypical endeavors. Thus, innovators (leaders) are often reluctant to admit failure, attempt to search out and articulate the reasons for failure, and to pose alternatives which appear more likely to succeed in light of what was learned through failure.

All this is to say that the leader must monitor the progress of new and/or revised programs and ultimately evaluate their effectiveness in terms of the degree to which they satisfy those needs they were designed to meet. This is a crucial phase in organizational renewal and is one which is often not dealt with for reasons noted above as well as for other reasons. This exclusion contributes to the lack of persistence which characterizes many change efforts along with retarding the dissemination of successful leadership acts to other organizations and systems.

As was the case in the first phase of this model - educational needs assessment - a required competency at this point has to do with instrumentation. Additionally however, it appears that the educational leader must possess rather traditional research competencies and that these must be incorporated into leadership development programs.

- Tests and measurement
- Individual appraisal
- Statistical methods
- Research methods and treatment of data
- Research design
- Theory of measurement

SUMMARY

To this point, the writer has described a model of educational leadership which defines leadership as the capability to introduce and maintain a process of organizational renewal. The model is composed of six elements which are perceived as the phases or stages of planned organizational renewal. The kinds of competencies and skills required to function effectively in each phase of the model have been noted along with resultant implications for leadership development programs.

IMPLEMENTING THE MODEL

It is one thing to describe a model or a program; it is quite another to implement it in such a way that those who experience it do in fact possess the skills the program was designed to develop and can exhibit them in real situations. Alot of evidence suggests that preparation programs of many types in many fields are so divorced from practice that there is no carryover tc real situations and that products of these programs become mesmerized by the status quo at least partially because they do not possess the skills to function as leaders. This has been especially true in traditional preparation programs for educational administrators. What follows is a program design which hopefully negates this effect and contributes to a more reality-oriented, pragmatic approach to the development of educational leaders.

The basic premise underlying this design is that people learn best when there is a need to know and that such a need is best generated in real situations. With this in mind, the writer visualizes a leadership team in school districts whose primary responsibility lies in the area of organizational renewal. This team would vary in number with the size of the district but perhaps a group of from 3 to 9 members would be appropriate in most districts. Team members would be located strategically in the organization so as to maximize their capability to promote organizational renewal. Members would occupy different roles in the system so that they would have input from and access to all organizational subsystems. Thus teachers, administrators, prospective administrators so designated by the district, supervisors, and/or curriculum specialists would be represented on the leadership team. Community members and students would not but input would be solicited from them in the needs assessment and program development phases of the renewal process. The experiences of the war on poverty program with maximum feasibile participation suggest that clients should be involved to the extent of indicating their felt needs and perhaps suggesting needed changes but that professionals should be primarily responsible for program development and function as advocates within the system.

An adjunct to the district's leadership team would be an instructional team composed of professors from an institution (or a consortium of institutions) of higher learning. This team would "instruct" the leadership team in the skills of organizational renewal, but not in the traditional way. Rather, they would take the leadership team members through the phases of organizational renewal in the district so that team members would learn appropriate skills and competencies by using them as needed to provide leadership in their own district. The makeup of the instructional team would change from time to time in light of the changing needs of the leadership team and the "competency pool" available in the training institutions. Over time, leadership team members would become involved in instruction in their own districts as well as in others. Thus a ripple effect would be created which hopefully would facilitate organizational renewal in an increasingly large number of districts. At this point it might be feasible to involve State Department of Education personnel in a training function thus affording a display of leadership behavior by that agency and at the same time facilitating the certification of a new breed of educational leaders. Graduate credit would be afforded leadership team members and any residency requirements might be satisfied by looking to the summers for extended periods of time on campus.

CONCLUSIONS

The model and program design posed in this paper appear desirable from a number of standpoints. Perhaps most importantly, prospective and practicing leaders can learn leadership skills by "doing their thing" in their own districts. Thus the reality of the training is greatly enhanced.

Secondly, training institutions leave the rather sheltered environment of the campus and instruct by helping people to develop skills as they feel a need to possess them. The potential impact on college and university programs suggested by this development should be immediately apparent.

Thirdly, the process of organizational renewal in school systems is enhanced through the use of the leadership team approach and the fact that teams are operating in their own districts. Obviously leadership acts need support and the team can provide that which the individual leader often finds himself lacking. Also, concrete evidence of improvement in a system can go a long way to reduce resistance to change.

Additionally, college and university professors and programs can better meet the test of relevance.

And finally, the new kinds of linkages forged among school districts, institutions of higher learning, and state education departments afford exciting possibilities for the improvement of educational practice.

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